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THE WOODMAN,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

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POEMS.

THE WOODMAN.

Deep in the forest stands he there,
His gleaming axe cuts crashing through,
While winter whistles in the air,
The oak's tough trunk, and flexile bough.

Upon his floor a leafy bed
Conceals the grass, and o'er his head
The leafless branches trimly rise,
The lattice of his painted skies.

Within the tree the circles are,
That years have drawn with patient art,
Against its life he maketh war,
And stills the beating of its heart.

The fibrous chips spin far and near,
A tangled net of twigs around,
The dry leaves whisper to his ear,
He stops to hear the cheering sound.

Nought but the drifting cloud o'erhead,
Nought but the stately pine afar,
A glaze o'er all the picture spread,
A medium that far suns prepare.

Above the wood the ravens call,
Their dusky murmurs fill the space,
And snow-birds toss above the wall,
And flickering shadows span the place.

In distant grove the fox-hound bays,
Where fainter strokes of axes beat,
And thin snow drives across the ways,
Untrampled by the Woodman's feet.

Beneath his axe the green moss grows,
Its cups stand stately on their stems,
Above the rock's divine repose,
With bright red in their diadems.

He must beware the dulling stone
Where drifts the snow, nor swerve his hand,
A hair shall make his axe atone,
For his mad carnage in the land.

Bravely he toils with patient blow,
While warmer grows the melting sun,
And damp the snow his feet below,
And from each twig bright jewels run.

The rough Pitch-pine with scaly stem
Crashes in thunder to the ground,
Its dark red mail is hid from him,
Till in the pile its worth be found.

The tough white Oak commands his eye,
He sees it in the saw-mill's power,
Its rustling leaves fern-colored fly,
Its winding limbs have met their hour.

When handsome noon fills out the day,
Behind the pile he stoops content,
And needs no fire, the sun's kind ray
Tempers the stinging element.

And opes the pail stored with corn-bread,
And frosty cake baked cheap with art,
And apples that last Autumn shed,
Like russet leaves from his good heart.

And then the snow-white bunting came,
To peck the crumbs that near him fell;
He did not give the bird a name,
He knew its pouting breast so well.

And single woodmen tramp the road,
Silent and staring, striding by,
For onward is their own abode,
There with the noon they hungry hie.

And when his robust treat is done,
He marks the hour by a true clock,
Glancing a moment at the sun,
His timepiece that shall never mock.

Then on the whetstone brights the steel
That polished enters easy in,
And cheered with his pinched, frosty meal,
The place reëchoes in his din.

And many a catch he sings with cheer,
And puts his soul into the work,
Such songs they should convince the ear,
That no regrets within him lurk.

Then piles the wood, in cords so high,
Thus the close trees are cut apart,
So grateful to the Woodman's eye,
The forest shade is in the mart.

'T is nearly eve, his taper gleams
Behind the horizontal pines,
That dark upon the setting beams
Draw shapely forms, in perfect lines.

And with a flood of amber light,
His candle sinks below the west,
Around the wood smiles still Good-night,
'T is time for home, 't is time for rest.

Thus shall he fare, nursed in the snow,
Child of the thaw, and son of frost, —
Who sweeps his floor he may not know,
A form his eye has never crost.

One blast each morn blows fresh and clean
Its greeting through the withered leaf;
His coldest day shows fair demean,
It pets him, and its stay is brief.

He cannot grieve for any hour,
His roof is painted so complete,
The gray tints of the sleety shower
Are soft, if savagely they beat.

The perfect trees that rise in air,
Composed, content they seem to him,
There 's nought but pleasure everywhere,
His cup is always at the brim.

Within the marsh, the muskrat gnaws
Sweet flag-root at his piquant meals,
And where the sly fox touched his paws,
The tell-tale snow his track reveals.

And all things press to him as one,
All times salute him as a day,
'T is nought with him save sun to sun,
Life is a short and skilful play.

His house is 'neath a pine at night,
A nest beyond the next stone wall,
The sky his roof so true and tight,
The ground hard timber for his hall.

The stone his chair, the cushions moss,
With lichens varnished neat and fine,
His flagon is a spring, its boss
Some twisting bramble-thorn and vine.

His opera plays a full-keyed wind,
That brushes spray-shower from the leaves,
His waltzes in the shadow find,
That every twig and leaflet weaves.

His picture is continual change,
The lights and shadows shifting fly,
His eye shall simply shift its range,
The landscape changes for his eye.

His glassy temple carved the ice,
Where with the brook the ravine runs,
There obelisks and porches rise,
Pagodas, palaces, by tons.

If a dead branch trail down the stream,
A white pavilion builds the linn,
That juts o'er mirrored walls, that seem
So clear that you could pass therein.

If a spent rail bridges the brook,
Along its length thick columns stand,
Their bases bright as silver look,
So polished by the cold stream's hand.

They rise propped on a silver stone,
Thin as a crystal bubble's robe,
And silver shields spread out alone,
Serrated fine, a lustrous globe.

And lower down white temples rise
Of alabaster free from scar,
The Woodman rubs his puzzled eyes,
And thinks his cities wondrous are.

An ashen swamp his banquet room,
Hung with an alder tap'stry fine,
Where chocolate globes paint red the gloom,
And cupped spiræas' branches twine.

And light-gray mossy rocks peep up,
Specked with the steel-black lichen smooth,
Where tufted plumes wave moroon cup,
Marsh-feather is the name forsooth.

And rugged trees hedge in the space,
Their outline costly oaks confuse,
Behind the beechen forests lace,
Here sits the wight, and spells the news.

Then whirls the powdery snow-storm down,
And pitch-pines go for chandeliers,
And powder-puffs the birches crown,
And stones are alabaster tears.

The bold north wind his cannon fires
Sweeping the pine, the smoke flies fast;
They shake the pointed, twinkling spires,
While o'er the field ploughs the cold blast.

TO JULIA.

I.

I am not dumb,
When to thee I come;
'T is only that thine eye,
Puts out my reply.

A chosen word,
My tongue could thee afford,
Were not thy ear,
Too beautiful to hear!

In thy warm, hazel eye,
Some deeper colors lie,
Than I have felt elsewhere,
In sky, or sea, or air.

In that persuasive mouth,
Still heaps the south
Its orange-bloom,
And makes the lip perfume.

Thy cheek whose tint is soft
May gently float aloft,
There, for angelic shows
Paint its smooth, peachen rose.

And if a seraph dare,
To steal thy raven hair,
To ornament his plume,
It darkened that high room.

Why wilt thou on me smile,
From a divine profile,
And in thy easy chair,
Show so much beauty there ?

Or wilt thou dream that I,
Can look in that dark eye,
And no kind feeling share,
With that which is so rare ?

No love between us goes,
Thou art an unplucked rose,
And yet thy rich perfume,
Hangs sweetly in the room.

If thorny is the hedge,
I stand on its bright edge,
And plums and cherries see,
And peaches not for me.

The grape I cannot steal,
Nor the ripe pear conceal,
But still my eye can see,
The richness of the tree.

Who eats sweet fruit is cloyed,
And 't is bliss unalloyed,
To trace the beauty there,
Through the soft, golden air.

II.

I worshipped at the shrine,
I brought the fruit and wine,

Milk and rich olives spread,
And wreaths for thy dear head.

I might have worshipped there,
Until my youthful hair
Had turned to silver gray,
And come my latest day.

What is a goddess worth,
If she smile not henceforth,
And if the worshipper
Has no return from her?

Thine eye might be as sweet,
As the soft hues that meet
Within the sunny brook,
Yet never on me look.

And honied be thy mouth,
As the unvaried south,
But if thou breath'st not here,
A winter I must fear.

I should have soothed thy heart,
Thou wouldst have felt the smart

Of love, as sweet as pleasure,
That flows from other measure.

We might have ended pain,
And filed away the chain
Of dullness and the world,
Love's silken flag unfurled.

Thy cheek had been as smooth,
After my kisses sooth
Had stirred some blushes there,
Amid the peachen air?

SONG.

Who would go roving
Far from his love,
Banish his loving,
Wearily move ?
Give me the heart that is mine for to-day,
To-morrow I care not what life takes away !

Give me the smiling
Eyes of my heart,
The sorrow-exiling
Sweets of love's art;
Give me the joys that are mine for to-day,
To-morrow I care not what life takes away !

Turn from me never,
Friend of my soul,
And the hopes sever,
In thy control;
Then may I move o'er the land and the sea,
Still dreaming so fondly of love and of thee!

Speak to me kindly,
While I remain,
Gaze on me mildly,
Ease me of pain;
Then shall be joy, and to part without sorrow,
Remembering thy mercy on the lone morrow!

TO LYRA.

So warm an air I ne'er have felt,
As breathed from thee upon my heart,
When near thy golden shrine I knelt,
Child of the summer! Nature's art!

Thy radiant smile seemed more to me,
Than music from a well-toned lyre,
Thine eye as gentle as the sea,
When soft afar day's beams expire.

Why should I breast the shining foam,
And weary the wild wave pursue,
If Beauty light the path at home,
Near thee, as fresh as morning dew?

What were the Indian gems if thou
Art brilliant as the sapphire's glow,
Or frozen Alps all blanched as now,
With their perpetual crown of snow?

If cold thine eye upon me fall,
And motionless thy brimming heart,
Thou 'rt nothing to me, and art all,
Child of the summer! Nature's art!

Some shadowy years may fold o'er thee,
Far in the dark-veiled future's hand,
And tears bedim the smiling eye,
And fruitless vows the heart command.

And life that is a weary thing,
May twine a wreath of care for thee,
And sin, and time, and sorrowing,
O'er the smooth brow trace their decree.

Thus on my thought the line is traced,
Thus sin, and time, and woe have done,
Yet in thy beauty are effaced,
As night is lifted by the sun.

Cold is the heart if Beauty's power
May wake no murmur in its tone,
That feels no more the early hour,
When first the sun of Beauty shone.

We met, — to part, few words to speak,
The hour by fate's chill poison sped,
My pathway leads o'er snow and bleak,
Thine, where the blushing roses shed

A richer glow than day's last smile,
A purer light than morn's first beam,
My heart is but a rock-girt isle,
Thine, like the gently gliding stream.

Then, fare thee well! speed joyous far,
Then, fare thee well! my queenly child,
Like Lyra, or the evening star
That o'er the meadow shines so mild.

OLD SUDBURY INN.

Who set the oaks
Along the road?
Was it not nature's hand,
Old Sudbury Inn! where I have stood
And wondered at the sight,
The oaks my delight?

And the elms,
All boldly branching to the sky,
And the interminable forests,
Old Sudbury Inn! that wash thee nigh
On every side,
With a green and rustling tide:

The oaks and elms,
And the surrounding woods,
And Nobscot rude,
Old Sudbury Inn! creature of moods,
That I could find
Well suited to the custom of my mind.

Most homely seat!
Where nature eats her frugal meals,
And studies to outwit,
Old Sudbury Inn! that thy inside reveals,
Long mayst thou be,
More than a match for her and me.

THE SUNSET LAKES.

The day had been a day of partial storm,
For the gray mist was drifting from the sea,
And o'er the moorland hung a heavy veil,—
A day of storm, yet fell no rain. I stood
Near sunset on the upland sere, and marked
A still, blue lake, far reaching to the east,
Skirted by woodlands deep, and nigh one house,
So placed, that he who dwelt there may have been
A lover of the field, and of the wood.
And while the dark mist drifted from the sea,
There flushed a sudden gleam of sunlight warm
Out of the west, at which the blue lake smiled,
And nature seemed inwardly glad. The scene
O'ertook me with a pleased surprise, — I stood

ıdering at the wild beauty, like that man
› lost within the forest, from some hill
vening sees his home afar, and shouts.
ı westward moving, I stood suddenly
ı the curve of a clear lake, where no eye
fancied it, dropped in a hidden dell,
›osomed in bright copses and dark pines,
one low cottage on the swelling shore,
leasing lines drawn clear against the sky,
tle rustic dwelling near the lake.

ad in this new-found wealth, I sought the way,
facing westward on the dusky moor,
re solitude was native to the air.
in a moment, further on, I came,
dreaming of these waters in that place,
ı the bank of a round mirror, framed
e brown hills. There, stretched on the crisp moss,
more than joyous for the charming scene,
nked good Nature for the generous skill
'hich she multiplied my happiness,
: me three lakes, thrice to rejoice my eyes,

The careless eyes that slowly seek the good.
And as I mused, upon the yielding moss,
A flashing beam of day's last glory fell
In unexpected splendor, through the gloom,
Slanting across the silent, lonely hills,
Until the place seemed social in this fire.
Then rising, with a love for the wild spot,
I hastened westward, as the day grew faint,
And climbing a low hill, stretched at my feet
A gray and dimpled lake lay in the shade;
A shapely basin rounded in soft curves,
Whose little lines of beach betray the waves,
That with a lapsing murmur touch the sand,
And loftier shores, with rain-swept grooves of soil,
And pleasant headlands crested by green trees,
And longer reaches pictured with proud woods.

Upon the steepest bank was reared a house,
Where sign of life or occupant was none,
Not e'en a barking dog or lowing cow, —
A tall and narrow structure on the sky.
Now had there been true feeling in my eyes

For nature's pure enchantment, — had I seen
Intelligently what her forms express,
And had my heart been loving as it should,
Touched by the concords of the sunset hour,
I might have made a hymn, and sung it there.

ON LEAVING ROME.

There is an end to all we know,
A swift Good-bye to all we have;
Beyond the present thing we go,
No sovereign hand can hold or save.

Still echoes in my ear thy voice,
Majestic city of the Past!
And bids my doubting heart rejoice,
As now I quit thee speeding fast.

Whirled down the dark blue gulfs I float,
Toy of relentless Ocean's tide,
And brave the surging empire's note,
And bridge the emerald mountain's pride.

And I would seek the rolling war,
Nor fear, and with the wave contest,
To touch again the things that are
So softly folded o'er thy breast.

The airy arches tinted soft,
The moonlit fountain trilling clear,
The beauty of the landscape oft,
Thy pictures, and thy art so dear.

I sought thee not a traveller vain,
My heart was neither glad nor gay,
My life had proved a life of pain,
The flowers I love had bent away.

Few friendly voices cheered me on,
Few dear caresses went with me;
Alone I loved thee, I have won
A present happiness from thee.

The truth that I had felt before,
I now can paint with clearer eye,
And that I did not reach, the more
Comes near me, and the reason why.

My native land, the proud and strong,
Stands stronger matched with thy decline,
I learn from thee that hate is wrong,
And loving-kindness most divine.

To Rome, farewell! that faltering word,
Dear name! — so far thou art to me
The sweetest sound I ever heard,
Save the brave cry of liberty.

QUARLES.

Dry as a July drouth,
And a simoon from the south,
Art thou, Sahara Quarles!
I love thee not;
Blaze 'neath the pot,
'T is the best thing that I can do for thee,
To make thee accelerate cookery.

Dusty and dry,
Thou wouldst the eyeball of a saint defy;
Thy emblems seem
A staircase in a choking dream,
Yet Herbert said,
Thy chip had his provoking hunger stayed.

HERRICK.

I READ in Herrick's verses,
I could see
The spirit of each tree,
Each quality that he rehearses,
Bodily.

I saw bright Herrick's flowers,
With which he binds the hours;
His rural fare,
A ripe and russet literature,
And sweet as nuts his songs to Larr,
And of himself rich lines a store.

When a pure wit he lauds,
'T is in such sense,
That no pretence
Of being less the verse affords;
Herrick is good as best,
And has the fact confest.

Then, Herrick, from thy blood
I draw some fire;
Better my desire,
And be my muse as good
As thine,
Who came of race divine.

DONNE.

Scholastic Donne!
Acme of self-conceit,
The Phaeton of Poets! one
To whom distinct concern was counterfeit,
At first thy song made me feel sick at heart,
Plaited with not a line of Goethe's art.

Perplexing Donne!
The enemy of a strait road,
To whom the honest sun
Must have as a traitor showed,
I learned to love thee soon,
Pleased with the subtle tune.

Heady yet wise!
As far as thy blind scrannel goes
Not to be imitated,
Searching, with thy deep eyes,
Thoughts that by no one have been said
Except thyself; the dies
For thy rich coin no later Muse bestows.

TO ROSALIE

Girl, so beautiful,
And sweet, I dare not love;
Girl, so dutiful,
That my heart will move
With a pure delight,
A tranquil worship, at the sight:

As a dewy rose-leaf falling
Loosely in the summer wind,
Or the twilight fancies calling
Far the buried sun behind,

Or on high a vesper bell
Softly tolling day declining,
In the mountains sounding well
Answer to a heart repining,
Or a sigh of the wind-harp's tongue,
By a silken zephyr rung.

As thy liquid eye
Sent a still reply,
As thy rosy mouth
Painted the warm south,
As the beauty flowed o'er me,
Noble maiden, born with thee,
Only could I wonder long,
For it frame this feeble song.

I might love when passion dances
In the dark, entrancing eye,
Answering to my dim glances,
Answering — I know not why,
But the lovely, simple Child,
Figure holy, spirit mild,

That angelic Rosalie
Without the least thought of me,
I could not love,
For her heart I ne'er might move.

Then I knelt before her beauty,
And I woke from idle longing,
Made it my most chosen duty
To this child to love belonging,
Her to lead in wood and dell,
Where the streams conceal their spell
In the breathless solitude,
And the leaning Silence nods
O'er the old, complacent wood,
Seat of unpretending gods,
And where'er the secret bird
With her melody is heard.

Be the weather cool or warm,
May it soothe her like a charm,
With its blossom spring enfold her,
With blushing flowers summer mould her,

With ripe fruit may autumn bless her,
With brave cheer white winter dress her;
And more, may I
Resist the force of every tie,
And on this spotless errand bent,
With a duty abstinent,
Vow to her the steadfast heart,
Silent tongue and sleepless thought,
Vow to her the spoils of art,
And the gold the mind has brought
From her rivers in the Reason,
To regild the faded season;
Vow them all,
And her my mistress call,
Whom to love were hopeless folly,
Maiden mild, and pure, and holy,
Whom to love ne'er was for me,
But to worship sacredly.

THE BOLD BARON

Spring to your horses,
My merry men all, —
So shouted the Baron,
Across the old hall, —
Away with a cheer
O'er the mountain and meer,
For the hart is aroused
From his bed in the heather,
And long has caroused
In the sweet Spring weather. —

Then hearing the Lord,
Twenty men took their bows,
And tossed on their caps,
And their quivers of arrows,

And in dresses of green,
They to horse all have sped,
And away they have rid,
Down the steep thundered,
And waked the wild deer,
From his couch that was near,
And him coursing have gone,
By the light of the moon.

But Alice was left
By the window alone,
Of her slumber bereft,
And gaily bestrown
With sweet thought that bright morn,
Looking out on the vale,
Far away o'er the corn,
And the lake where one sail,
Was tipped by the light of day,
That shot o'er the mountain,
And fleet ran along,
To river and fountain,
And the covert bird's song.

Young Alice was beautiful,
Wondrous and fair,
Hazel rich were her eyes,
And rich brown was her hair,
And her form was a sight
To adorn every dream,
In her lover's brief night,
And her soft, lovely eyebeam
Was a spell of such power,
That it filled every hour,
With a light of its own,
And a fanciful tone.

Where, where is my lover! —
Thus the sweet Alice sung,
And where has he rid
The bold hunters among?
Is he chasing the deer,
O'er mountain and meer,
Or sits he alone,
In his proud father's hall,
And ponders his book,
Or leans o'er the wall?

Come Clarence, come now,
In my ear breathe thy vow!

On my cheek may thy lip
Seal the first kisses there,
As deep in my heart,
Thy dear form I may wear;
They all to the chase,
On the fleet coursers race.

Not one is left here,
Save old nurse who well knows
The love of my Clarence,
And shares my dear woes! —
When into the window,
Beyond where Alice leaned,
There sprang in a youth,
By the broad shadow screened.
His arm round her waist,
Her rich beauty embraced,
And her lips to his own,
Were pressed in a swoon.

Her cheeks dyed with blushes,
Were than roses more red,
And her heart beat like flushes
The thunderstorms shed,
And still to the youth she clung,
Who sweetly thus sung:

Dear Alice! my Alice!
My own lovely child,
I have heard thy low words,
Thou bride undefiled,
And below is my steed
Who is fleet for the war,
But can carry at need,
A lady full far,
And below on the lake,
Is my boat with her sail,
And the wind shall us take
Till the four towers fail,
Of the castle so old,
Kept by the Baron so bold.

O my father! said Alice,
But my father has gone; —
'T is the thing that I love! —
And he pressed her cheek long,
Thy father has sped
To the chase of the deer,
There is nothing to dread,
There is nothing to fear,
Then come, haste away,
And be quick, wastes the day.

O my father! said Alice,
But my father is kind! —
Fear not, said the youth,
He shall be of our mind,
Fear not, I shall come
To the castle again,
And bring my Alice home,
And fill the old keep with men,
And the Baron so bold,
Shall laugh when he sees

My prowess and courage,
And fire flash from his eyes. —

Then dim the mist gathered
Along the low shore,
In a phantom all gray,
And the wind sighing o'er,
Made the castle to echo,
And the shrubs at its base
All mournfully rustled
Along the brown space,
And the Nurse from her room,
Beneath the fond pair,
Cried, — the hunters are coming,
My Alice! take care! —

And the thundering crash,
Of their hoofs on the stone,
Whirled up the steep ascent,
And the court-yard forlorn,
Thou wilt fly! Alice cried,

'T is my father's wild band,
Fly, fly, for thy life !
And whither ? — his hand
On her shoulder is placed,
And they two are now bound ;
Down the steep castle-side,
They had slid to the ground,
When the Baron so bold
In the arch of the tower,
Looked out from his hold,
At that merciless hour ;
The youth with his prize,
Had just lit on the earth, —
Shoot, shoot ! said the Baron,
Touch not child of my birth,
But kill me this thief,
Who would rob me so brief !

Four bows bent amain,
And four arrows off sped,
But touch not the twain
With the copse overhead,

Nor touch the proud courser,
Whose silken rein shook,
Not a whit in his hand
As the youth up it took,
Then dashed in his spurs,
O'er the heath, o'er the moors,
And away they have flown,
For a second alone.

Out! saddle your steeds!
Said the Baron so bold, —
Ride, ride, for your lives,
Strike that knave, ne'er be told
That we missed him this time,
If the chase be not prime. —

They sprang to their horses,
With might and with main
They drave like the lightning,
After the twain,
But the fleet-footed courser
Was steady and far,

Their deer had been chased,
And that morning their war,
Yet they lagged not behind,
And swept on like the wind,
The Baron 'fore all,
With plumed figure so tall.

Down fell horse after horse,
Until three only were left,
And two more than the Baron,
Near the shore's sandy cleft,
And they saw as they ran,
The white sail shake and fill,
And across the vexed water,
As they plunged down the hill
To the desolate beach,
Did the little bark reach.

And the Baron was frantic,
And maddened alone,
For the rest drooped behind,
And his arrow has flown ;

It strikes in the breast
Of the sweet Alice then,
And the Baron falls helpless,
A corse for his men.

Alas! for the day! —
Sang the Nurse when they came,
With the bold Baron home,
And they told her the game,
How the arrow had sped,
And the boat had sailed on,
Alas! for the day,
And our Lord who is gone.

And woe for the day!
For our Alice so sweet
And her Clarence so true,
And the courser so fleet;
Ye tell me that Alice died not
In her pride,
And the lover drew out,

The red shaft from his bride;
Alas! in her heart, the arrow is left,
And her father is dead,
Of all pity bereft!

TO ——, THREE YEARS OLD.

A LITTLE boy,
To be his parent's joy,
A tender three year old,
Close in a shapely fold,
Whose trusty eye,
Draws a great circle of new sky!

His eye is blue,
As loved Italia's heaven,
Or the mid-ocean hue,
And Mediterranean even,
Or the bright petal of a star-shaped flower,
Autumnal Aster, or the Gentian's dower,
Or the just god's cerulean hall,—
How shone this eye o'er us at all?

How smiled its birth,
O'er trifling Concord earth ;
How is it here,
Shining blue above the bier
Of the dead autumn flower,
And in my November hour?

Thou little boy,
To be thy parent's joy!
Thou angel sent,
Angel eloquent,
To drill the close-grained moment,
How gaze our wondering eyes at thee ;
One, whom the god has anchored
In a bare plain, from the clear sea
Of his creative pleasure,
Moored thee to measure
The fathoms of the sense,
In the hard present tense !

Child of the good divinity,
Child of one,

Who shines on me
Like a most friendly sun;
Child of the azure sky,
Who has outdone it in that eye,
That trellised window in unfathomed blue,
Child of the midworld sweet and true,
Child of the combing, crystal spheres,
Throned above this salt pool of tears,
Child of immortality!
Why hast thou come to cheat the Destiny?

By the sweet mouth,
Half parted in a smile,
And the fat cheek,
And upright figure,
And thy creamy voice so meek;
By all thou art,
By the pat beating of thy criss-cross heart,
How couldst thou light on this plain, homespun shore,
And not upon thy own aerial riding,
Fall down on earth where turbid sadly pour,
The old perpetual rivers of backsliding?

e thou art fast
r autumnal ball,
histle and specked grass weave thee a nest ;
unce if possible the mighty air-spanned Hall
of imperial nectar,
s of transparent porphyry,
thystine rings of splendor,
t footstools of chalcedony !
alabaster bed,
re in the plume of Seraph sunk thy head,
ie full sounding organ of the sphere,
ie smooth, hyaline finger of thy peer,
norously played !

the sack, examine it !
are prickly chestnuts
tinkle when they fall,
the meat of oily walnuts,
a pitch-pine tall
s scaly cone,
a terrace with alders sown,
g the fleet brook's grassy side,
child ! down this, thou mayst glide.

In the sack 's an oaken chip,
Be thy skiff no more,
Sedge-grass for thy whip,
And a fountain for the roar
Of the brazen chariot-wheel,
Buzzing at thy pinkish heel.

Fix a blue jay's scream
For the whistle of thy car,
Hear no costlier music in thy dream,
Than the tap of the hard-billed woodpecker,
And suck ambrosia from tipped columbine,
And out the red fox-grape crush a tart wine.

Be those blue eyes,
Thy only atmosphere,
For in them lies,
What is than earth, than Heaven more dear!

THE FISHER-BOAT.

All day the cobble dashed,
All day the water splashed
Along her sides;
The wind rose high,
Said Alfred, I can spy
That we must have high tides.

See, father, how the Crested rock,
Proudly flings off the shock
Of hurrying seas,
And yet its height,
Should ere the night,
Be dry beneath the breeze. —

Old Peter shook his head,
And soberly to Alfred said, —
My boy let's take our chance,
And throw the lines,
And let the signs
Of wind and wave go dance. —

So Alfred threw
His sealine in the blue
And rolling wave ;
The cobble spun,
The boiling crests among,
And faced the billows brave.

— My hands are cold, —
At last said Peter old, —
Alfred, my boy,
The day must soon be done,
And soon will set the sun,
Then heave-a-hoy. —

Heave-o, heave-o,
The cobble's anchor rises-o,
She whirls away ;
The dashing oar,
Dips more and more,
Among the shadows of the day.

Let 's make some sail ! —
Cried Alfred pale
With the moon's first beam ; —
The wind 's so high,
Our boat will fly,
Like spirits through a dream. —

Haul up ! my lad, —
Said Peter glad,
The sail flew out,
Then dashed against
The mast. — All saints !
Defend us ! — said Peter stout.

Then bellying full,
A sudden lull,
Rested them on the foam
Of a high crest;
They saw afar their nest,
And the red light of home.

From chimney top,
The smoke stole up,
As Mary by the fire,
Stood frying neat
Some flounders sweet,
Joe had just speared for her.

— When will they make
The beach, and break
Across the ugly surf?
Said Mary dear,
To Peggy near,
The heaped-up fire of turf.

And Peggy's heart,
From Mary's caught
Half of a mete of woe, —
My Alfred come, —
Cried Peggy, — home, —
Mary, how the wind does blow ! —

The little house,
Rocked in the rouse,
And the one window creaked,
A cold, still moon,
Far up looked down,
And into it half-peaked.

'T is cold, — said Mary, —
As January,
A bitter mad October,
My stars ! that blast
I hope the last,
And that they both are sober. —

Meantime the boat,
Sped like a shot,
From some deep cannon's mouth ;
The spray flew in,
Amid the din,
There ne'er was such a drouth.

Keep her head strait, —
Said Peter, great
Amid the frantic pother ; —
Run her across,
The Devil's horse,
And nothing can her bother. —

The rudder creaked,
The water leaked,
Fast through the surf she flew,
And high she 's beached,
And Peter dashed
Upon the sand below.

The old man lay,
Drenched in the spray,
And Alfred lifted him
Across his back,
And took the track,
To the low cottage dim.

And reached the door,
As Peter o'er,
His trance had fairly come, —
Cried Mary, — See!
Peter! what 's happed to thee? —
Why wife, I have got home!

And Alfred laughed,
And Peter quaffed
Some spirit from the can,
And Peggy saw
What it was for,
And Alfred felt a man.

I guess, — said Alfred,
Father had been dead,
If I had not brought off
His shattered body,
To his glass of toddy,
And *was* buried half. —

And so they ate,
A supper late,
And still the gale blew strong,
But the red fire,
And the mug higher,
Circled with song.

This is a storm, —
Cried Peter warm, —
But we have had our day;
Alfred my boy,
I give you joy,
That we sailed safe away.

SONG. — TO-DAY.

In the old time,
Listening to the chime
Of the melodious world,
Before despair
Darkened the air,
And woe his flag unfurled.

In the old days,
When life was crowned with bays,
And pleasure's glass went round,
Or we thought it did,
Not heeding what was hid,
In the sweets profound. —

In the Future's hand,
In the promised land,
Fair hopes are building
Palaces and towers,
And gay reception-hours,
Bright with beauty's gilding!

In the coming dream,
How glitters every stream,
Singing a low song
Down the clove of the mountain,
And sparkling in the fountain,
The shady valleys among.

But better is To-day!
Than all the fine things say,
To-day! is a dusty hero rough,
And his muscles are firm,
And his heavy arm,
Is both fit to strike and tough.

He has no couch of pleasure,
But war's sternest measure,
Is that he best shall know;
He is a bold man,
And the chief of a bold clan,
No bolder or stronger rules below.

He would not be dashed,
If his sparing armor clashed
With the rapier of a ghost,
And his hearty cheer,
A battle may safely dare,
Even with a mighty host.

Then let us all be bold,
And grow not ever old,
But strike through thick and thin,
And conquer if we can,
And if not support the man,
With at least brave hope to win.

THE XEBEC.

A soft wind rose, the Xebec sailed, —
She left the sunny port with glee,
Her lateen sail how gently failed,
Far o'er the laughing, azure sea.

No more the high brown shore in view,
The white Sierra coldly grand,
But stretched around its sparkling hue,
A wave that never washed the land.

The Xebec was a sharp, swift boat,
Her polished side was black as night,
Well did she trim, and gaily float
Like sea-bird o'er the water light.

Four sailors bold her crew compose,
And one fair youth who tempers these,
The swarthy men who feared no foes,
The rovers of the rolling seas.

And noon came on, the sailors slept,
The youth his watch kept in the stern,
When a levanter softly crept,
Poured from the desert's Arab urn.

Then freshened on so merrily
The Xebec leapt along the foam,
And left a long wake on the sea,
And parted further from her home.

And freshened on the fiery breeze,
Until the blue wave curled in air,
And fast they flew along the seas,
And gay they felt no further care.

Then clearer grew the sky all o'er,
And bolder blew the steady wind,
And now the Xebec plunged the more,
Whirling the eddies far behind.—

Haul fast the sheet! — the crew obey,
The bending mast hung o'er the waves,
And brighter shone the dazzling day,
And louder, louder the wind raves.

She strains and pulls, the rudder creaks,
They tack the sail, and on she drives,
While in her bottom start the leaks, —
They run a race, — 't is for their lives.

Take in the sail! — in vain they try,
It splits, and surges off the mast,
Along they plunge 'twixt sea and sky,
And driving onward, — onward fast.

One moment in the deep blue wave,
The next upon the topmast spray,
The winds weave riband as they rave,
Long lines of foam that glide away.

Then sweeping o'er the Xebec's side,
A monster wave pours crashing in,
No bark could brave the sea's blue tide,
Spares not the crew the rolling din.

The Xebec tosses on the sea,
A battered wreck to sail no more,
And still the youth how wearily
Dreams of a warm and sunny shore.

He sleeps how softly on the tide,
The Xebec drives upon the beach,
The youth dreams silent on the wide,
Cold couches of the sandy reach.

He wakes! — and in a fruitful isle,
Dark groves vine-covered steal his eye,
Ripely the waving harvests smile,
And perfumed breezes gently sigh.

He sees the Xebec's broken shape,
And stepping slowly seeks the field,
From loaded vine he plucks the grape,
Beneath, clear springs cool water yield.

If it was Home! — he sadly says, —
Alas! my vessel ne'er shall sail,
With the green isle must end my days,
Could I not perish in the gale?

And fell his tears in showers to earth,
Where proudly ruined temples stand,—
Why was I noble in my birth,
Alas! this is not my own land!

THE MAGIC CASTLE.

Wind the horn, —
Said the Forester bold,
Blast the bugle,
The night falls cold,
Pathway shimmers,
Fire-fly glimmers,
How the gude-wifes will us scold.

Then blew a blast,
Those hundred foresters
Upon a hundred shining horns,
The old wood stirs,
The trees in motion,
Rise and fall like an ocean,
Organs were the ghostly firs.

Blast again,
My hunters strong! —
Cried the hardy Forester,
They blew a blast more loud and long,
The dogs did clamor,
And in a second,
As they ne'er reckoned,
Uprose a castle there.

Lofty sprang the ivied walls,
Blazing shone the handsome halls,
Open stood the doors and wide, —
My hunters bold! — thus cried
The jolly Forester,
Welcome the lordly cheer.

Spur every one his horse,
On rushing dogs and men,
Wind clear your shining bugles,
Spur and dash ye then,
Within the open gate,
And banquet in that state. —

Then like a whirling sea,
The fiery cavalcade,
Poured through the courteous gate,
And the coursers played
A merry march,
By the sculptured tower and arch,
And when the last was gone,
Close together the gates swung.

Of all this host,
But one was left behind,
He was a feeble Minstrel,
With some verses in his mind;
On foot he weary was,
Nor sped with their light horse.

He saw the splendid hall,
Fade like a dream in air,
No more of man, of horse, or hound,
And in a strange despair,
He sung the halting verse,
Which we may now rehearse. —

Where have vanished horse and hound, —
Thus the Minstrel sang,
Hunters flying o'er the ground,
And the gates that clang,
While I linger sighing here,
In the misty evening air.

No lady's eyes,
No sweet girl's flatteries,
Nor learning's pride,
Nor riches, nor the tide
Of fortune carries me,
Whither the hunter's destiny.

I saw the gates together fall,
The building rise in air,
And chill the night creeps slowly down,
And the star is gleaming fair,
And my heart is cold, —
O for the life of a hunter bold!

WALDEN SPRING.

'HISPER ye leaves your lyrics in my ear,
arol thou glittering bird thy summer song,
nd flowers, and grass, and mosses on the rocks,
nd the full woods, lead me in sober aisles,
nd may I seek this happy day the Cliffs,
'hen fluid summer melts all ores in one,
oth in the air, the water, and the ground.
nd so I walked beyond the last, gray house,
nd o'er the upland glanced, and down the mead,
hen turning went into the oaken copse,—
eroic underwoods that take the air
'ith freedom, nor respect their parent's death.
et a few steps, then welled a cryptic spring,
'hose temperate nectar palls not on the taste,

Dancing in yellow circles on the sand,
And carving through the ooze a crystal bowl.
Here sometime have I drank a bumper rare,
Wetting parched lips, from a sleek, emerald leaf,
Nursed at the fountain's breast, and neatly filled
The forest-cup, filled by a woodland hand,
That from familiar things draws sudden use,
Strange to the civic eye, to Walden plain.
And resting there after my thirst was quenched,
Beneath the curtain of a civil oak,
That muses near this water and the sky,
I tried some names with which to grave this fount.
And as I dreamed of these, I marked the roof,
Then newly built above the placid spring,
Resting upon some awkward masonry.
In truth our village has become a butt
For one of these fleet railroad shafts, and o'er
Our peaceful plain, its soothing sound is — Concord
Four times and more each day a rumbling train
Of painted cars rolls on the iron road,
Prefigured in its advent by sharp screams
That Pandemonium satisfied should hear.

he steaming tug athirst, and lacking drink,
he railroad eye direct with fatal stroke
note the spring's covert, and by leaden drain
hieved its cold crystal for the engine's breast.
range! that the playful current from the woods,
ould drag the freighted train, chatting with fire,
nd point the tarnished rail with man and trade.

INDIAN BALLAD.

Give me my bow,
Said the Leaping Deer,
And my arrows sharp,
With their feathered cheer.

Then, the Graceful Fawn
Who sat in the tent
Of the bison's skin,
Felt half sad and faint.

But she handed him
The long strong bow,
And the poisoned arrows,
She handed too.

And the dark papoose,
From his panther-skin
Rolled o'er on the floor,
And laughed with a din.

They called his name,
The Star of the East,
So mellow he was,
And so gay in the feast.

And give me my moccasin,
Said the Leaping Deer,
For I must to the brake,
With my feathered cheer.

Low was the sun,
When the Graceful Fawn
Looked forth from the tent,
From her soft boiled corn.

Bright was the morn,
But the Leaping Deer
Came not to the tent,
And they 'gan to have fear.

She asked of the Wise,
Why the warrior stayed,
And she asked the old squaw,
And the bright-eyed maid.

And the warriors strong,
Now girded them up,
And each took his bow,
And his arrow so sharp.

Twenty and tall,
Were those warriors red,
Painted and plumed,
Was each haughty head.

And they sung a hoarse song,
As they tramped to the wood,
Beyond the last lodge,
To the green solitude.

O where is our brother,
The swift Leaping Deer,
And where has he fled,
With his arrowy cheer?

Has he sunk in the marsh,
Where the dog-wood is wet,
Has he buried himself
In the panther's net?

Has he fallen in fight,
With the Raven our foe?
Let us seek him till night,
Where'er we may go. —

And he lay in the mouth
Of an old panther's den,
Two cubs dead beside him,
A prize for ten men!

He was torn by the claws,
Of the mother so cross,
And jagged and marked,
Like a heart with remorse.

Then the warriors tall,
From the pine made a bed,
And they bore him along,
Thus torn and thus dead.

Till they reached the low lodge
Where the Graceful Fawn sat,
With the Star of the East,
Upon a hard mat.

The warriors haughty,
Tramped silently on,
And there they paused once,
And with slow step have gone.

She heard their shells rattle,
And saw their furs shake,
As they marched slowly by,
And no word ever spake.

She saw on the litter,
The torn Leaping Deer,
And no tear stained her eye,
She came not more near.

But still to her breast,
The Star of the East,
She held closely and firm,
As she had in the feast.

The old squaws they came,
And surrounded the bier,
Where near sat the Fawn,
By the still Leaping Deer.

They spake to her slowly,
No word did she say,
They touched her cold arm,
Where the dark papoose lay:

Cold as the stone,
Where the spring-water falls,
Her tongue was all silent,
And fixed her eyeballs.

Then this song sung the women,
As the sun painted the east,
Our sister is gone,
And our brother has rest.

To the land of the Spirit,
Flown the sweet Graceful Fawn,
There too is the Leaping Deer,
Both in the red morn.

And the boy shall be ours,
And the tribe shall him make,
A terrible hunter,
For the mountain and brake!

MAID MARIAN AND THE PAGE.

Run, said Maid Marian,
Run, to the Page,
Hie thee o'er meadow,
And plume thee in rage,
And let thy light heart,
With sorrow split apart!

False fool that thou wert,
To make love so to me,
And claim my soft kisses,
And hope in my eye,
A Page and a boy,
Can ne'er give a maid joy. —

Then the Page spake so cheerly, —
My mistress so fine!
Thou lovest me dearly,
I truly divine,
When thou say'st thou dost need,
A man at thy heed.

And my lovely Marian!
Wilt thou believe,
That I am a man,
And I do not deceive?
How thy cheek is deep red,
And thy lip as it bled!

THE BLACK EAGLE.

SPARE him not! said the chief,
Haughty was the White Bear,
Spare him not! cried they all,
As he smote so now shall he fare,
'T is the foe of the tribe,
The Black Eagle we describe!

They bind the Black Eagle
To a stiff ash-tree,
His hands tied behind,
And thongs at his knee,
And they bare his broad chest
That ne'er tremor confest.

Ten warriors step forth,
Each armed with his bow,
And each took good aim
To kill the proud foe,
When the bright Harvest Moon
Sprang swift, and lovely as June;

And a soft, graceful form
Placed 'tween him and them:
Kill me, if you will,
And spare the brave Sachem;
In my heart is a place,
For that cold, patient face!

BAKER FARM.

Thy entry is a pleasant field,
Which some mossy fruit trees yield
Partly to a ruddy brook,
By gliding musquash undertook,
And mercurial trout
Darting about.

Cell of seclusion,
Haunt of old time,
Rid of confusion,
Empty of crime,
Landscape! where the richest element
Is a little sunshine innocent;
In thy insidious marsh,
In thy cold opaque wood,

Thy artless meadow,
And forked orchard's writhing mood,
Still Baker Farm!
There lies in them a fourfold charm.

Alien art thou to God and Devil!
Man too forsakes thee,
No one runs to revel
On thy rail-fenced lea,
Save gleaning Silence gray-headed,
Who drains the frozen apple red,
Thin jar of winter's jam,
Which he will with gipsy sugar cram.

And here a Poet builded,
In the completed years,
For behold a trivial cabin
That to destruction steers.
Should we judge it was built?
Rather by kind nature spilt
To interfere with circumstance,
And put a comma to the verse

And west trends blue Fairhaven bay,
O'er whose stained rocks the white pines sw
And south slopes Nobscot grand,
And north the still Cliffs stand.

Pan of unwrinkled cream,
May some Poet dash thee in his churn,
And with thy beauty mad,
Verse thee in rhymes that burn ;
Thy beauty, — the beauty of Baker Farm !
In the drying field,
And the knotty tree,
In hassock and bield,
And marshes at sea !

Thou art expunged from to-day,
Rigid in parks of thy own,
Where soberly shifts the play,
And the wind sighs in monotone.
Debate with no man hast thou,
With questions art never perplexed,
As tame at the first sight as now,
In thy plain, russet gabardine dressed.

I would hint at thy religion,
Hadst thou any,
Piny fastness of wild pigeon,
Squirrel's litany,
Never thumbed a gilt Prayer Book,
Here the cawing, sable rook!

Art thou orphan of a deed,
Title that a court can read,
Or dost thou stand
For the entertaining land,
That no man owns,
Pure grass and stones?

Idleness is in the preaching,
Simpleness is all the teaching,
Churches in the steepled woods,
Galleries in green solitudes,
Fretted never by a noise,
Eloquence that each enjoys.

Here humanity may trow,
It is feasible to slough

The corollary of the village,
Lies, thefts, clothes, meats, and tillage!
Come, ye who love,
And ye who hate,
Children of the Holy Dove,
And Guy Faux of the State,
And hang conspiracies,
From the tough rafters of the trees!

Still Baker Farm!
So fair a lesson thou dost set,
Commensurately wise,
Lesson no one may forget.
Consistent sanctity,
Value that cannot be spent,
Volume that cannot be lent,
Passable to me and thee,
For Heaven thou art meant!

THE END.

THE WOODMAN,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

BY

WILLIAM ELLERY CHANNING.

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